



# WOMEN IN CHARGE

independence through healing, education and support

Spring 2020

## Pandemic Plans

Following Missouri State guidelines, our last day of in person classes was March 10th

### *What are we doing now?*

**Academics:** providing support through on-line/email/Google classroom assignments to our students AND helping them help in their new roles of teacher to their stay at home children.

**Resources:** assisting our student finding items like food and diapers; with housing and medical issues.

**Mental Health:** counseling and other help dealing with job loss, increase in domestic violence, children home all day and the stress and anxiety of living in these strange times.

**Fundraising:** considering how we raise funds to continue to help this vulnerable population.



## Edena's Story

Being at the homeless shelter, I just didn't want to just sit there. I needed to better myself for me and my child. I needed to finish school because my mother never finished school and I didn't want to create a cycle. Miss Ann told me I'd be finished by spring and that's good because I just started at the end of January.

A lot has happened in my 17 years of life – I've been through depression, anxiety, mental and physical abuse.

My father was working all the time, my mother was mentally abusive and I always had to be my own support. That's why my self esteem is low, my mother

*Cont'd on Pg. 3*

## *Our Mission Statement*

*Women In Charge heals the spirit, builds confidence, and educates women in need so that they may provide a better life for themselves and their children.*

We offer Adult Education and Literacy instruction, HiSET preparation, individual and group counseling, career counseling, parent mentoring, yoga and computer classes. The program is free of charge. A free on-site children's program is available to participants. September through May, hours are: Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 2:30 PM. Summer hours are: Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 12:30PM.

## Fundraising Woes

**Good News:** Women In Charge did not have a spring fundraiser that had to be cancelled.

**Bad News:** Women In Charge is very dependent on the fall fundraiser.

Our traditional party for 250 people where we serve a delicious buffet of Salt + Smoke food, and then open the spread of homemade desserts, just doesn't seem like a good idea this year.

Just because we are not having a face to face fundraiser doesn't mean that our need is in any way diminished. We are looking at different options and will keep you posted. Please remember us when you are thinking of donating to a GREAT cause in these rough times!

### *Why is it more important than ever?*

The high rate of unemployment tends to impact the poorest of the poor first—that would be our participants. They will need: their **high school credential** to have a chance of finding a job; **counseling** to deal with all the added stresses; **assistance in finding resources**; help in planning low cost meals to **feed their families**. Many of our participants live with larger family groups. Numerous children from multiple families with just a few bedrooms. Is it any wonder domestic violence is on the rise?

## Did you know?

If you do your Amazon shopping through **smile. amazon** it will automatically give Women In Charge a .5% donation on all eligible products. It's sounds small but it really adds up. Think about how often do you order off Amazon...

Just select Women In Charge the first time you use Amazon Smile and after that it is automatic. So easy and it costs you nothing.

***Please consider this!***

## *Is Women In Charge getting any federal help?*

Yes! We successfully applied for the Payroll Protection Loan which gave us almost two months' worth of salaries and rent.

Phone: 314 432 7300

Email us at:

[vsharp@womenincharge.org](mailto:vsharp@womenincharge.org)

Check out our website:

**WomenInCharge.org**

*Like us on  
Facebook!*

**Follow us on  
Instagram.**

## Please

**share your email  
with us!**

We have emails for about 20% of our database. We are not sure of the fall fundraising format and would like to be in touch without more mass mailings. We promise not to sell it to anyone or use it for any other purpose other than to communicate directly with you.

Email it to us:

[sue@womenincharge.org](mailto:sue@womenincharge.org)

or

Phone it in: 314 432-7300

**Thank you!**

## Board of Directors

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can break my heart but I can't stay away from her. I still have that expectation to be treated as I deserve to be treated. She always lets me down.

I grew up in Grand Rapids Michigan. We moved to Illinois to be with my mother's boyfriend. My junior year of high school got rocky. A lot of bullying at school and a lot of physical abuse by my mother's boyfriend.

I met my boyfriend on social media – he was 23 and I was 16. He manipulated me – he made me laugh – but I didn't see the darkness in him. I got pregnant and I got a job. I was supposed to pay \$25 a week to my mother and her boyfriend to take me to work and because he bought the food for the house. I worked 7-hour shifts, but he wouldn't let me eat until I got my paycheck. I was so hungry – this went on for two weeks until I got paid. Then my mom's boyfriend started putting his hands on me. He tried to choke me, he hit me, he tried to pour hot grease on me. I told my mom but she blamed me so I moved in with my baby's father. When I tried to leave he started to hit me, locked me in his house and took away my phone. So, I went back to my mother's house. I had to sleep with one eye open.

I called the homeless hotline and they gave me a case worker who tried to find me a safe home. I decided to search with her and I found a shelter for teen girls and their babies. My case worker called them every day for a month and finally I got in. I cried when I got in because I wanted my baby to have somewhere where she would be safe, and I didn't have

## Looking for the Silver Lining

While looking at yet more Covid data recently I realized I have become very proficient at calculating percentages in my head—a little silver lining to this whole wildly unexpected Pandemic we are living through. I have asked many others for their silver linings and here are some of their answers:

Joys of jigsaw puzzles rediscovered.

That picture of the Himalayas visible in a crowded Indian city.

Watched all the Marvel movies.

Tried out new recipes for gnocchi and shakshuka with great results.

Crocheted an entire afghan, first time in 40 years.

Less time in hotels and airports on business travel.

A really clean house.

Walking, walking, walking

Opportunity to grow a beard.

Nightly games including Dominos and Yahtzee.

Weekly chats with old friends.

Daily Zoom calls with siblings.

Finally cleaning out some closets.

Charlie (the dog) living her best life.

More time at home with the new baby.

Food Cooperative business is booming.

Workers in distant office locations become collegial via Zoom.

Watched all the Harry Potter movies.

to sleep with one eye open. My pregnancy was high risk because I had high blood pressure. Now it is great because I got away from all that stress.

From when I was 5 years old to when I was 10, my grandmother's husband sexually abused me. I didn't think it was bad, nobody explained to me that he wasn't supposed to do that. So, it left my memory because I wasn't dwelling on that. No one told me that's not normal. When I got old and started being able to understand, things that he did to me came back in a nightmare. I didn't understand, I asked "why me?" and I started acting out in school. Now that I have counseling and therapy, they tell me I have PTSD. I'm better now, I decided to get on

medication to get out of that deep sulking depression because I wanted to be a better person for me and my baby. If I'm not okay she's not okay.

This last year and a half, especially since I got into this shelter, I have a stronger sense of security. I didn't know about God before; once I found him my life took a whole 360.

All of this stuff I've been through had to be because of God, this drastic change in scenery.

*{Edena left the shelter suddenly. We do not know where she is, but we hope to see her again. She has strong academic skills and was on track to sit for the HiSET in a few weeks.}*

# We Miss Our Students!



Hoping to reopen this summer, read inside to find out what we are doing now.

  
**WOMEN IN CHARGE**  
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